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RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 0004
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RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 8182
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA PRIORITY 5290
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 0526
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 1995
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 8681
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/JUSTICE DEPT WASHDC PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000026

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SUBJECT: A LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA ASKING FOR AN APOLOGY
FOR COLD WAR FIRINGS

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¶1. (U) Poloff met with members of the "The National Liaison Center against the Red Purge" to accept a letter for President Obama. The men, in their late 70's and early 80's, described being fired from their jobs as communists or communist sympathizers almost 60 years ago. They were, they said, summarily fired without any recourse to appeal. The loss of a job they explained, carries a great social stigma in Japan, and as a result, many of those purged committed suicide. The rest survived as best they could, but few of them, teachers, administrators, workers, were ever able to obtain positions of equal pay or status, they stated. "Now," says Keiji Kaneko, Secretary General of the Red Purge Center, still tall and clear-eyed at 80, "all we want to do is to be able to die with some dignity, by having the United States and the Japanese government admit that what was done to us was wrong. There aren't many of us left now, and every year our numbers decrease."

¶2. (U) Comment: Japanese courts have found that the actions that took place during the Red Purge were unconstitutional. Redress though has not been possible for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the companies involved have changed their legal identities. Scholars debate the extent to which the Red Purge was solely a United States-initiated effort, with some pointing to evidence showing that domestic anti-Communist forces also appear to have played an important role. End Comment.

FULL TEXT OF LETTER

¶3. (U) "The United States of America that Ordered the Enforcement of the Red Purge Sixty years ago, should Acknowledge its Error and Apologize to the Victims

December 24, 2009

The Honorable Mr. Barak H. Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

During the postwar period from 1949 to 1950, of the

occupation of the U.S armed forces, the Red Purge enforced on all over Japan was large-scale, atrocious and sly oppression.

It has never been seen even in the world history. Estimated 40,000 workers were branded as "subversive elements" by reason of the members of the Japanese Communist Party or its supporters and suffered serious mental, material and social damages because of being purged from their jobs. It shows obviously that there were a lot of people who killed themselves since they could not bear difficulties. And the Japanese people's social movement which declared sensible demands such as protecting the life of the people from damages of the war, reconstructing the exhausted industry and economy, and planning to eliminate militarism and to establish democracy, suffered immeasurable damages.

The Red Purge was implemented nationwide in the name of General D. MacArthur, Special Commander of the Allied Powers, who was dispatched by the U.S Government. This purge started with the curtailment of administrative personnel and the industrial readjustment in 1949, and the main reason of this unfair dismissal which aimed at the members of the Japanese Communist party and its supporters, was based on "The nine principals of economic stabilization" -the Dodge Line- of your Government's policy.

Furthermore, the then Japanese Prime Minister, Shigeru Yoshida, said plainly, "We framed a plan to discharge red elements....in accordance with the suggestion of the General Headquarters." At the time of the following Red Purge for teachers, the lists of teachers concerned were handed down to local authorities by C.I.C (Counter Intelligence Corps). In 1950, the full-scale Red Purge was implemented on the basis of the anti-Communist statements and letters submitted several times by General MacArthur. Even the Japanese Government and industrial leaders who carried it out have no

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intention of hiding this fact.

The consent of the Cabinet meeting of the Japanese Government -"A matter on the expulsion of Communists and its supporters from public offices" - expresses the expulsion of activists by quoting from the MacArthur documents, and the note addressed to the local governors -"Regarding the expulsion of Communist subversive elements within enterprises" - states that the Red Purge has to be implemented in accordance with the process of General MacArthur's statements and letters. Judging from above circumstances, there is little room for doubt that your Government particularly had responsibilities for the Red Purge.

The Red Purge was openly contrary to the Constitution of Japan that had already been established. Naturally enough, even the Occupying forces should have respected the Constitution that guarantees the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, freedom of thought, and conscience, and freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all forms of expression. Furthermore, it completely offended against the United Nations Charter, the Potsdam Declaration, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that all clearly state the prohibition of discrimination because of thought and creed, and the establishment of fundamental human rights. Therefor, had your Government, which did the signature of such the Declaration and the Charter, followed these principles faithfully, it would have given no instructions of the Red Purge.

The United States of America is a country where the significance of human rights is highly respected and you, Mr. President, always voice the importance of human rights. That is why your Government has to acknowledge its critical error of the implementation of the Red Purge ordered 60 years ago, apologizing for the victims whose human rights were violated, and showing your sincerely toward the resolution of this matter.

We call on your Government to take effective measures for the relief of human rights of the victims, while consulting with the Japanese Government that implemented the Red Purge in accordance with the instructions of your Government. By doing so, we are convinced that the word "Change", which was

emphasized during your presidential campaign, will be surely animated.

Sincerely yours,

Keiji Kaneko (Secretary General)

The 5th General Meeting of

The National Liaison Center against the Red Purge

6-17-13, Tomioka Higashi, Kanazawa-ku

Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa, Japan"

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